

NEWS RELEASE



***OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
San Diego, California***

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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - September 11, 2006

United States Attorney Carol C. Lam announced the sentencing of two defendants today in federal court in San Diego in two unrelated cases involving the manufacturing of marijuana plants, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 846.

The Honorable Napoleon A. Jones, Jr., United States District Judge, today sentenced defendant Daniel Barton to serve thirty-seven (37) months in custody following Barton's guilty plea to conspiracy to manufacturing approximately 532 marijuana plants.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Sherri Walker Hobson, who prosecuted both criminal cases, defendant Barton managed and operated a substantial marijuana "grow" at a residence located on Pala Loma Drive, in Valley Center. In his guilty plea, Barton admitted that the entire residence was used to cultivate marijuana plants from August 2003 to July 21, 2005, the date when Drug Enforcement agents executed a search warrant at that location.

In the second case, United States District Judge Larry A. Burns, today sentenced defendant Christopher DeMatteis to serve thirty (30) months in custody following the defendant's guilty plea to conspiracy to manufacture approximately 555 marijuana plants.

In connection with DeMatteis' guilty plea, he admitted that he was the caretaker and operator of a substantial marijuana grow operation located on Spring Canyon Way, Oceanside, California, which was owned by his brother and codefendant Eric DeMatteis, who also has entered a guilty plea. That residence, which was located in a gated community, was used solely for the purpose of cultivating marijuana plants. The DeMatteis brothers have admitted that from October 2004 to February 24, 2006, they stole electricity from San Diego Gas and Electric to operate their grow at the Spring Canyon Way residence, a fact which supported an upward departure in the advisory sentencing guidelines. Judge Burns also ordered DeMatteis to pay restitution to San Diego Gas and Electric for the electricity that was stolen to operate the marijuana grow.

Codefendant Eric DeMatteis is scheduled for sentencing on October 16, 2007, at 9:00 a.m. before Judge Burns.

DEFENDANTS

Daniel Barton

Criminal Case No. 05cr1560J

Christopher DeMatteis

Criminal Case No. 06cr0512LAB

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Conspiracy to Manufacture Marijuana Plants - Title 21, United States Code, Section 841(a)(1)
Maximum Penalties: 40 years in custody, up to \$1,000,000 fine, at least five years of supervised release.

AGENCIES

Internal Revenue Service
Drug Enforcement Administration
San Diego Narcotics Task Force